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acquisition, however, are making their appeal to the entire rural population by nourishing and building up the best possible activities of the country boy and girl, and by preventing the adult mind from running around upon a cycle of hard industrial facts. The non-reading habit, so common to the average rural community is being gradually broken down."

For the state of West Virginia, Mr. Walter Barnes of the Fairmont Normal School prepared an exhaustive report. Mr. Barnes drew up eight counts in the indictment against the high-school libraries in the cities of the state and at the same time indicated the direction along which improvements should be made. Reports similar to the report for West Virginia have been completed for Maryland, Tennessee, Alabama, Virginia, Louisiana, Arkansas, and Missouri, with detailed supplementary reports upon the question of high-school library control in the South.

Only a beginning has been made in the undertakings of the Committee on Southern High-School Libraries. The greatest task ahead consists in the awakening of public sentiment. Public opinion must be aroused concerning the functions, services, and needs of the high-school library. Specific problems must be solved more definitely regarding the administration, the maintenance, the organization, and the use of the high-school library. Investigations must be made regarding school-library legislation in southern states. Work in the future must be done with sufficient completeness and authoritativeness to appeal strongly to taxpayers, school boards, and teachers. The forthcoming bulletin, now being prepared by the Committee, will contain a constructive program for high-school library development throughout the South.

ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO—RELATIVELY SPEAKING

By MARY S. SAXE, *Librarian, Westmount (P. Q.) Public Library*

When the British delegate to the American Library association meeting was in this country in 1913, he journeyed homeward via Montreal, Westmount, Quebec, to take his steamer for Liverpool. We, therefore, had an opportunity to entertain him by asking him to tea at the Place Viger Hotel, a Canadian Pacific hostelry, extremely well run. And there on a wide balcony, with flippy awnings, and potted plants tea was served.

Our guest I remember stirred his cup very fast, tasted it, and murmured, "Oh! my aunt!" Now I have never been quite sure whether that tea was to his liking or not. But the expression, "Oh! my aunt!" has remained with us, and I have been apt to use it when surprised.

Therefore when your secretary wrote to me in May, and asked if I was ready to come here tonight and tell you somewhat of a dead and gone New England poet whose centenary is this June, 1916, I was

startled enough to have said "Oh! My aunt!" but I had to change the gender, and say "Oh! My uncle!"

It seems that your president, Miss Plummer, thought you might feel an interest in this Vermonter who amused an older generation. And now that the incense which has been wafted toward Shakespeare's image, has all vanished into 'airy air,'—I quote the bard of Avon's own language which we know to be good despite the commentators,—and now that the disputes, as to whether Shakespeare ever ate Bacon or not, are more or less settled, perhaps you will be ready to hear of the anniversary of the birth of a much, much humbler poet.

John Godfrey Saxe was born on June 2, 1816, in a very northernmost corner of Vermont, in a town marked on the early maps of Franklin county as Saxe's Mills. We know it as Highgate. He was born in the frame house, still standing, which had

been built by the pioneer grandfather, who moved in Revolutionary days from Rhinebeck on the Hudson river, up through the full length of Lake Champlain and settled in those northern woods, very certain that he was in Canada. But they had to draw the line somewhere, and when the boundaries were finally settled, this great-grandfather discovered that he had been taken in by the United States!

Journals which John Godfrey Saxe kept in his boyhood and which are now the property on his grandson in New York City, show that he was fond of roving in those northern woods, of sitting by the mill stream and reading Scott's novels.

Verses of his which begin,

"Beneath the hill, you may see the mill
With wasting wood and crumbling stone,
The wheel is dripping, clattering still—
But Jerry the miller is dead and gone,"

are clearly reminiscent of his youth. He was educated at the local schools, and graduated from Middlebury College, Vermont, in 1839. Last week his centenary was celebrated by his Alma Mater in a very special manner. With the class of Harvard '54, he received the degree of LL.D., and at a banquet on that occasion he read the Psi Upsilon verses, the closing lines of which are sung at most of the meetings of that fraternity today. They run thus:

"Success to Psi Upsilon, Beautiful name!
To the eye and the ear it is pleasant the same.

Many thanks to one Cadmus who made us
his debtors,

By inventing one day those *capital* letters,
Which still from our hearts, we shall know
how to speak,

When we've fairly forgotten the rest of our
Greek.

Remember 'tis blessed to give and forgive;
Live chiefly to love, and love while you live;
And dying when life's little journey is run
May your last fondest sigh—be Psi
Upsilon."

After his graduation, Saxe settled at Burlington, Vermont, and studied law there. He became attorney-general, state's attorney and was twice candidate for governor.

At one time he was editor of the Burlington Sentinel, and old scrap books of his are filled with bits of campaign jests and rhymes of those good old fashioned times that have lost most of their meaning for us. There is a note of sternness in his northern Democracy that makes us feel he would not have been "Too proud to fight!"

When he was about twenty-five years of age, his ballad of "The briefless barrister" appeared in the "Knickerbocker magazine," the leading periodical of that day. The next contribution was "The rhyme of the rail." This was reprinted all over the United States and appeared in London "Punch" and was known to generations of school children. "In reading it," says one commentator on Saxe, "one can close his eyes and almost hear the varied sounds that form the undersong to the monotonous rumble of the train."

Now it is not my intention to read to you any extracts from his published verse. If you are interested enough to look it out for yourselves, it will help your non-fiction circulation, and after all, that is a librarian's aim in life—to have a good circulation. But I will repeat to you some verses that have been handed down to me, and which you will not find in any complete edition of his poems, nor anywhere in print just as I give them. I quite realize these are not suited to the ears of the children's librarian—but we will hope she has gone home!

(Miss Saxe here recited "Ho-Ho of the Golden Belt. One of the nine tales of China. Versified and di-versified by J. G. S.," but the limitations of space unfortunately prevent reprinting it here.—EDITOR.)

I think you will agree with me that such rhythm is not found in the so-called modern poetry, which has to have its rhythm beaten out so that the eye catches what there is rather than the ear.

Fashions change in literature, but certain things abide. There may be disputes from generation to generation, even from decade to decade, even from day to day, as to what is beautiful, what is aesthetic in

poetry. But there is less dispute as to what is human. Perhaps that is why the verses of John Godfrey Saxe still appear and reappear in the press, though he has been dead more than a quarter of a century.

He realized that the mission of humour was to restore the balance which is frequently lost by so much that is drudgery in life. A vein of jests is soon worked out, but humour is a perennial flower.

THE PRINTING BILL

By GEORGE H. CARTER, *Clerk, Joint Committee on Printing, Congress of the United States*

I am directed by the Joint Committee on Printing of the Congress to thank you for this opportunity of again discussing the Printing Bill before your round table. The Joint Committee greatly appreciates the continued and helpful interest that the American Library Association has manifested in its efforts to bring about much-needed reforms in the printing and distribution of government publications. On behalf of the committee, I desire especially to express its appreciation of the generous co-operation of your genial chairman, Mr. Godard, in the consideration of these provisions of the Printing Bill that are of principal concern to libraries. The committee regards as of the highest importance the distribution of government publications to libraries and, I am sure, earnestly desires to have that distribution made in the best possible manner that the fullest information may be freely available to all the people concerning the affairs of their government. With this object in view, the Printing Bill has been presented to Congress.

When I had the pleasure of addressing your round table at Washington in 1914, the bill was pending before both Houses of the Sixty-third Congress. Subsequently, the bill was passed by the House at the third session of that Congress and was favorably reported to the Senate, but it was not reached for consideration in that body before the end of the Congress. The bill was re-introduced in both Houses at the beginning of the Sixty-fourth Congress and has again been favorably reported from the Printing Committees of the House and

the Senate. In the House, the bill has been considered on two calendar Wednesdays of the present session and about half completed without any material changes, other than the rejection of the proposed valuation plan for the distribution of documents by members of Congress, which the committee expects to have restored before the bill is passed by the House. Under a new rule of that body, the bill had to be laid aside as "unfinished business" until the Printing Committee is reached again on the Wednesday call of committees, which probably will not occur until next session. In the Senate, the bill is now well to the front of its calendar of business, but will hardly be taken up for consideration at this session unless Congress remains in Washington until late in the summer. The committee is very hopeful, nevertheless, that the bill will become a law before the close of the Sixty-fourth Congress.

Representative Barnhart of Indiana, who put the bill through the House in the Sixty-third Congress, is again in charge of the measure in that body, while Senator Fletcher of Florida, chairman of the Joint Committee on Printing, has charge of the bill in the Senate, assisted by Senator Smoot of Utah, who, as chairman of the Printing Investigation Commission, introduced the bill in the Sixty-first Congress and secured its passage by the Senate in the Sixty-second Congress.

Senate and House Bill Identical

The Senate and House Bills (S. R. 1107 and H. R. 8664) are identical except for a few minor amendments. The two committee